

Allyson Ray

Ag Testimony

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I speak in support of Bill #5283, which equalizes funding for Agricultural Science programs with other school choice programs, so more students can enroll in ag programs in the future. The week before going into high school terror, fear, and angst are three emotions I felt. I was already terrified of becoming a freshman because I was very shy. When I got my schedule I realized it wasn't complete yet, so I began to freak out even more. However, our school's Ag program was there for me. They allowed me to quickly apply and accepted me into the program. Joining this program has been one of the best decisions I have ever made because it has changed me for the better.

This change began my freshman year when our chapter was looking for students to apply for the officer team. At first, I was not interested, but my teacher had confidence in me and pulled me aside and asked if I was applying. I immediately said "No," but before I could walk away, she said something that changed my life. "I think you should at least consider it because I think you would make a great officer." Her words made me rethink who I was and what I could do. With her support, I applied, and went through the interview process. I was elected our chapter's sentinel and was so proud of what I had accomplished. I couldn't wait to be a part of the team and continue to push myself to try new things in the future.

This year I had the honor of being elected president for a second term. FFA has given me the confidence to easily speak in front of large groups of people. This program has also given me so many tremendous opportunities to further my growth. While the initial decision to join this amazing program was made by a scared, shy freshman, the experiences I have gained these past four years have helped me blossom into a young woman who is no longer afraid to take on new challenges.

FFA has also taught me so much about what I would like to do in the future. Through our program I have learned a lot about how our oceans are being heavily polluted and what we can do to help reduce the problem. It's my dream to one day have the opportunity to use the knowledge I have gained while in this program to help save stranded marine mammals and rehabilitate them back to health so that they can eventually be released back into the ocean. All in all, I support this bill because it will help so many ag students like me succeed.